

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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R 050940Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4983

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 6647

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG

SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE REACTION TO BERBERA BASE

1. ARAB LEAGUE DIRECTOR OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS TOLD EMBOFFS JULY 3 THAT BURDEN OF PROOF REGARDING CHARGES THAT SOVIETS ARE BUILDING MISSILE BASE AT BERBERA RESTS WITH UNITED STATES. ARAB LEAGUE CURRENTLY HAS ACCEPTED SOMALI VERSION OF BASE CONSTRUCTION THAT SOVIETS ARE BUILDING BASE FOR SOMALI ARMED FORCES. ARAB LEAGUE REP SAID THAT PRENCE OF MISSILES ARE CRUCIAL TEST FOR ARAB LEAGUE. SOVIETS CAN BUILD BASES FOR ANYONE FOR NATIONAL USE. ABSENCE OF MISSILES WOULD INDICATE THAT BASE CAN REMAIN UNDER SOMALI CONTROL AND SOVEREIGNTY AND, THEREFORE, DOES NOT REPRESENT FOREIGN PRESENCE. PRESENCE OF MISSILES, HOWEVER, WOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT SOMALIS ARE NOT CAPABLE OF CONTROLLING BASE AND WOULD BE PROOF THAT SOVIETS INDEED ARE BUILDING BASE FOR THEIR OWN USE.

2. ACCORDING TO AFRICAN DIRECTOR, ARAB LEAGUE HAS SEEN PICTURES IN THE HERALD TRIBUNE, BUT REMAINS UNCONVINCED OF PRESENCE OF MISSILE BASE.

EILTS

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